(c) whether Sludge Blanket Plant, developed by a Dutch Company for Ganga Action Plan, is yet to be used in any other country;

(d) if so, the reason for using an unproven technology on such a large scale; and

(e) if not, the details of use of such a system in other places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The article titled "Foul flows the Ganga" in Outlook magazine dated 28.12.98 has been communicated to UP Government and the concerned State officials incharge of Ganga Action Plan works in Varanasi for examination and necessary corrective measures. Also, the Government has recently constituted a committee of expert NGOs to suggest steps to be taken to make the programme more successful.

(c) to (e) The UASB (Upflow Anacrobic Sludge Blanket) process developed by Dutch universities has been adopted in Ganga Action Plan under the Dutch bilateral assistance programme after extensive pilot plant studies in India and evaluation by experts of the performance of this technology in India and other countries. This technology requires less area of land and equipment and facilitates biogas power generation instead of power consumption as compared to other conventional mechanized sewage treatment technologies. The UASB technology is currently in use in Columbia, Brazil, Mexico, Portugal and Indonesia.

Decline in the Bamboo Forests

1883. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that forests and stock of bamboo in the country is going down alarmingly;

(b) whether Government have conducted any survey on the socio-economic aspects of bamboo usage in the country by the poorer sections;

(c) whether it is afact that bamboo resources, particularly in the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh, have depleted over the last 10 years;

(d) whether any financial incentives would be offered to States like Andhra Pradesh to revive their bamboo forests; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The Forest Survey of India, Dehradun assesses the forest cover of the country biennially and as per the State of Forest Report, 1997, the forest cover including Bamboo forest of the country has decreased by 5,482 sq. km as compared to the 1995 assessment.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No study report has been received by this Ministry about the depletion of bamboo resources in Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh. However, as per the State of Forest Report, 1997, forest cover of 3822 sq. km has been reduced in Andhra Pradesh in the period from 1989 to 1993.

(d) and (e) Bamboo plantations are raised under on-going Centrally Sponsored Schemes and externally aided projects.

केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड में रिक्त पद

1884. **श्री रामगोपाल यादव:**
श्री ईशदत्त यादव:

क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड में अधिकारियों और कर्मचारियों के अनेक पद रिक्त हैं;